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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics
Washington

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Prospects for Peas for Canning

Preliminary plans of pea canners, as reported to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, indicate that they had in mind, previous to January 25, a total of 229,500 acres. If growers were to plant such an acreage, the crop, under average growing conditions and yields, would produce a pack of about 17¼ million cases.

Under growing conditions such as those of 1930 this acreage would mean a pack of about 16¼ million cases. On the other hand under the poor growing conditions of 1931 this acreage would probably result in a pack of about 12 million cases.

Preliminary plans for planting is a step far removed from the final pack. There is no basis at this time for an estimate of acreage or pack for 1932. Even actual plantings may give no accurate indication of the size of pack. The acreage of green peas harvested for manufacture is usually a reasonably good criterion of size of pack. The volume of production however, which is acreage harvested times yield per acre, is the best measure of size of pack in most pea canning States.

A planted acreage of 229,500 acres, under average conditions would probably result in about 217,000 acres being harvested. If this acreage were distributed among the various States as indicated in the preliminary plans report and if average yields were obtained in each State, the total United States production would be about 206,000 tons, or 17¼ million cases.

The accompanying Figure I illustrates the relationship between the size of crop and the pack for the years 1918 to 1931. Each dot on the figure indicates the production of peas for canning (as read from the scale at the bottom) and the size of the pack (as read from the scale at the side) for the year designated. The diagonal line extending through the scatter of dots indicates an average relationship between the crop and size of pack. The vertical line extending from 206,000 tons crosses the diagonal line at a point which is on the horizontal line representing a pack of 17,700,000 cases.

A pack of 17,700,000 cases is an indication of the probable size of pack when quality of crop and packing conditions are normal. It is possible for a crop of 206,000 tons to result in a pack either larger or smaller than the above figure. This fact is illustrated in the accompanying figure. In 1928 a production of about 204,000 tons resulted in a pack of about 18¼ million cases. The 1926 production amounting to about 215,000 tons resulted in a pack slightly less than 17¼ million cases. In recent years, however, there appears to have been a tendency to pack more cases from a ton of green peas than in former years. This is illustrated by the fact that the dots representing each of the years 1926 to 1931 inclusive appear above the average line.

A more nearly accurate picture of the relationship between crop and pack for the United States may be obtained if each of the States, growing peas for canning, is studied separately and the individual results added to make a composite result. A ton of green peas will pack a given number of cases in one State in a certain year whereas in another State having different weather conditions etc., more or less cases may be packed from a ton that year.

Wisconsin, the State which produces the largest crop and pack of peas has also a relatively high average yield per acre. The yield of green peas for canning during recent years has, however, been trending downward. The relationship between production and size of pack in that State is closer than in some other States. Consequently a given change in acreage in Wisconsin (in terms of acres) may result in a larger change in size of United States pack than would a similar acreage change in certain other States.

New York, second in size of pea pack, has an average yield below either that of Wisconsin or the entire United States. The relation between production and size of pack in New York is about as close as it is in Wisconsin.

Maryland ranks third or fourth in size of pack and about average in yield. The relationship between crop and pack has been very consistent in that State.

Owing to drought conditions in certain areas in 1930 and 1931 the yields during those years were not representative for the States effected. The 14-year average (1918-1931) yield may not be representative in some States because of certain changes in growing and packing policies during recent years consequently the 3-year average (1927-1929) yield was used also to compute production and pack.

If, for example, the acreage in Wisconsin should be 90,240 and the yield per acre equal to that of 1930, the production would be 81,667 tons and the pack would probably be 6,750,000 cases.

If, however, the yield per acre should be the same as that of 1931, the production from 90,240 acres would be 49,632 tons with a probable pack of 4,000,000 cases.

Should the yield per acre be the same as that of the 14-year average this acreage would produce 90,826 tons and a probable pack of 6,750,000 cases. The 3-year average (1927-1929) yield and this acreage would result in a production of 88,210 tons and a probable pack of 7,325,000 cases.

The following table gives the estimated production and pack for Wisconsin and several other States worked out by this method.

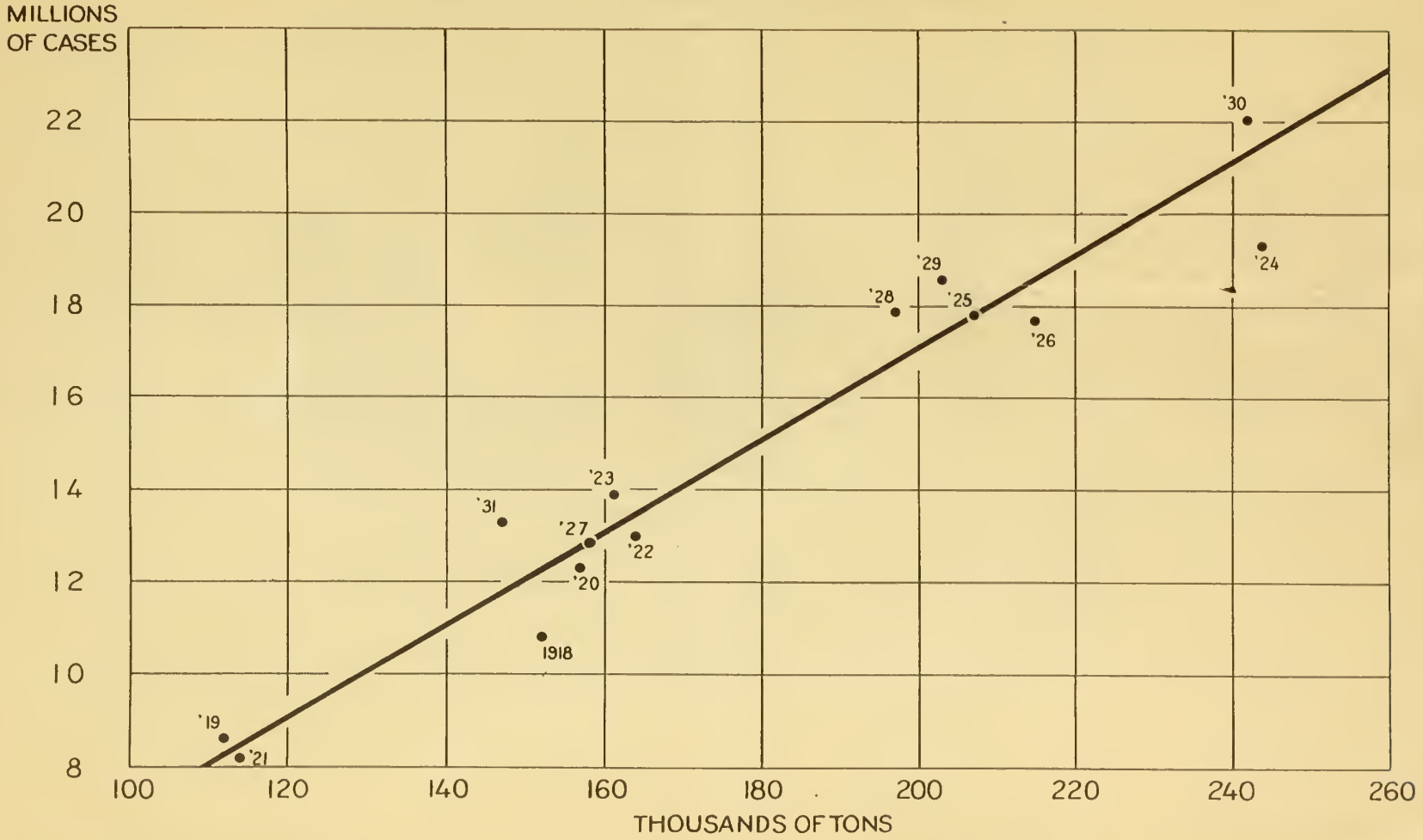
Peas for manufacture: Production, probable pack with specified acreage and yield, certain States and United States

State	Acreage for harvest 1/	On basis of 1930 yield per acre: Production	On basis of 1930 yield per acre: Pack 2/	On basis of 1931 yield per acre: Production	On basis of 1931 yield per acre: Pack 2/	On basis of 1918-1931 average yield per acre: Production	On basis of 1918-1931 average yield per acre: Pack 2/	On basis of 1927-1929 average yield per acre: Production	On basis of 1927-1929 average yield per acre: Pack 2/
	Acres	Tons	1,000 cases	Tons	1,000 cases	Tons	1,000 cases	Tons	1,000 cases
N.Y.	33,900	37,290	2,975	21,866	1,850	30,000	2,480	24,391	2,000
Ill.	15,365	16,902	1,640	12,830	1,200	12,876	1,220	12,284	1,150
Mich.	12,445	11,760	835	6,596	460	9,148	650	8,742	615
Wis.	90,240	81,667	6,850	49,632	4,000	90,826	7,650	88,210	7,400
Minn.	14,706	12,720	1,085	6,470	580	12,051	1,040	13,081	1,120
Md.	13,020	3,255	350	10,676	1,030	11,783	1,125	15,188	1,460
Utah	7,252	9,972	800	7,397	580	10,253	845	8,728	680
Others	30,420	24,488	2,200	28,717	2,300	28,914	2,600	29,827	2,750
Total	217,348	198,054	16,735	144,184	12,000	205,851	17,610	200,451	17,175

Division of Statistical and Historical Research

1/ Calculated from preliminary plans for planting as reported January 25, 1932.
2/ Probable pack under normal quality and packing conditions. Calculated for certain States and the United States with specified sizes of crop.

RELATION BETWEEN PRODUCTION OF PEAS FOR MANUFACTURE AND PACK: UNITED STATES, 1918-1931



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